

VZCZCXRO4881
RR RUEHHM RUEHLN RUEHMA RUEHPB RUEHPOD
DE RUEHKO #2325 1440346
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 240346Z MAY 07
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3880
INFO RUEHZN/EST COLLECTIVE
RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 1229
RUEHNAG/AMCONSUL NAGOYA 0447
RUEHNH/AMCONSUL NAHA 3663
RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE 4793
RUEHKS/AMCONSUL SAPPORO 2110
RUEAUSA/DEPT OF HHS WASHINGTON DC

UNCLAS TOKYO 002325

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EAP/J HYAMS AND WEBSTER AND OES/IHA
DEPT PASS TO WHITE HOUSE OSTP
DEPT PASS TO NIH/NIAID WESTERN
DEPT PASS TO CDC/NICID
DEPT PASS TO USDA
HHS FOR OGHA STEIGER AND BHAT

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [AMED](#) [EAGR](#) [TBIO](#) [JA](#)
SUBJECT: MEASLES OUTBREAK IN TOKYO

REF: 06 TOKYO 3245

¶1. Summary. According to Japan's Infectious Disease Surveillance Center (IDSC), an outbreak of measles cases has been reported in the Kanto region surrounding Tokyo, affecting young adults in particular. Some universities and high schools have cancelled classes in order to halt the further spread of the disease. IDSC has issued a warning to the public that the measles are spreading in the Kanto region and is recommending vaccination to those who have not been inoculated. End summary.

¶2. An investigation by the Asahi Shimbun newspaper has revealed that 221 students were infected with measles as of May 21 in seven Tokyo-area universities with around 150,000 students. 279 cases have also been reported in 104 Tokyo Metropolitan high schools as of May 18. These universities and high schools have decided to close for a certain period.

¶3. Dr. Nobuhiko Okabe, Director of the IDSC, commented that measles may be spreading among those in their teens and twenties because this age group, inoculated against measles in childhood, has since had little exposure to the measles virus and their original immunity may have been weakened. Newspapers have cited some doctors as saying that some of those their teens and twenties were not vaccinated as children due to concern about side effects of the MMR vaccine in the late 1980s.

¶4. In response to concerns of the shortage of the vaccine stockpile, the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare (MHLW) has requested medical institutions to purchase the appropriate number of doses. As of May 18, 80,000 doses have been stockpiled, but 30,000 doses were distributed on just three days from May 16 to 18.

SCHIEFFER